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HEALTH
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Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for
the Year ended 31st December, 1955.

To the Chairman and members of the Norton-Radstock Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and health of your district for the year ended 31st December, 1955.

SECTION A.

(1)	Area (in acres)	...	...	...	3,360
(2)	Population	...	...	...	12,130
(3)	Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	3,953
(4)	Rateable value (at 31st December, 1955)	...	...	...	£50,732
(5)	Sum represented by penny rate	...	...	...	£203. 14. 9d.
(6)	Chief industries:-				
	Coal mining				
	Agriculture				
	Paper bag making				
	Printing				
	Glove making				
	Wagon repairing				
	Timber constructional works				
	Boot and shoe making				

Unemployment.

The figures at the Midsomer Norton Labour Exchange for unemployed were, on the average, per week as follows:-

Men: 36 Women: 15

Prescribed Particulars in the Administration of the Factories Act, 1937.

Part I of the Act.

Inspections for the purposes of provisions as to health
(including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

<u>Premises</u>	<u>No. on Register</u>	<u>Inspections</u>	<u>No. of Written Notices</u>	<u>Occupiers Prosecuted</u>
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6 are to be enforced by local authorities	46	7	-	-
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by local authorities	11	9	-	-
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by local authorities (excluding out-workers)	10	31	-	-
TOTAL	67	47	-	-

(2) Cases in which defects were found:-

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			
	Found	Remedied	Referred To By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	3	3	0	2
Overcrowding	0	0	0	0
Unreasonable temperature	0	0	0	0
Inadequate ventilation	0	0	0	0
Ineffective draining of floors	0	0	0	0
Sanitary conveniences:-				
(a) Insufficient	1	1	0	0
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	0	0
(c) Not separate for sexes	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	5	5	0	2
Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted - 0.				

Part VIII of the Act.

Outwork - Section 110

Nature of Work

No. of Outworkers in August
List required by Section 110(1)(c)

Wearing apparel

130

Vital Statistics (Figures in parenthesis are comparative figures for England and Wales).

Births

	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live Births:-			
Legitimate	95	85	180
Illegitimate	3	3	6
TOTAL	98	88	186
Still Births:-			
Legitimate	1	0	1
Illegitimate	1	0	1
TOTAL	2	0	2

The birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was:-
15.3 (10.5)

Deaths

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
83	74	157

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was:-
12.9 (9.3)

Death rate from puerperal causes ... 0
 Death rate of infants under 1 year of age:-
 All infants per 1,000 live births ... 43.0
 Legitimate infants per 1,000 live births 43.0
 Illegitimate infants per 1,000 live births 0.0
 Deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

Males 4 Females 4 Total 8

Under 1 week ... 4
 1 - 4 weeks ... 1
 1 - 6 months ... 2
 6 - 12 months ... 1

Causes of deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Congenital Malformation	3	1
Prematurity	1	2
Broncho Pneumonia	0	1

Causes of deaths were :-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Coronary Heart Disease	7	9	16
Hypertensive Heart Disease	1	3	4
Other Heart Disease	12	11	23
Other Circulatory Disease	3	2	5
Circulatory Lesions of the Nervous System	12	9	21
Cancer			
of Stomach	2	1	3
of Lungs	1	0	1
of Breast	0	2	2
of Uterus	0	1	1
of Other Sites	9	11	20
Tuberculosis of Lungs	1	1	2
Pneumonia	2	4	6
Bronchitis	5	4	9
Other Diseases of the Respiratory System	12	2	14
Influenza	0	1	1
Nephritis	0	2	2
Leukaemia	1	1	2
Congenital malformation	3	0	3
Other Ill-defined Diseases	3	7	10
Motor Vehicle Accidents	2	0	2
All Other Accidents	2	2	4
Suicide	2	1	3
TOTAL	80	74	154

SECTION B.

General provision of Health Services for the Area:-

1. Public Health Officers of the Authority:-
 - (a) Sanitary Inspector and Housing Officer
 - (b) Surveyor and Water Engineer
 - (c) Temporary Medical Officer of Health (Part-time)

2(a) Laboratory Facilities.

Provided by the County Authorities at Taunton and Bath.

(b) Ambulance Facilities.

Under the control of the Health Department of the Council at Taunton. The service continues to be efficient and the staff very helpful.

Ambulance Facilities (Contd)

An adequate car service is also provided for those requiring transport on medical grounds.

(c) Nursing in the Home.

The District Nursing Service - the Nurses in this area provide an efficient, essential and sympathetic service.

The amount of time the nurses spend on their different duties varies considerably from area to area. This would seem to be influenced to some extent by the medical practitioners in the area, and the proximity of a hospital or hospitals accepting maternity work.

In the Midsomer Norton area the order of their different categories of work according to the amount of time required is as follows:-

- (1) Sick nursing of which nursing of the aged is a very large proportion.
- (2) Infant welfare visiting.
- (3) Maternity cases.

Very few hypodermic injections are given.

In the Radstock area the work is as follows:-

- (1) Infant welfare visiting.
- (2) Maternity cases.
- (3) Sick nursing (of which nursing of the aged is a small proportion).

A large number of hypodermic injections are given.

The Home Help Service.

The demands on this valuable service still appear to exceed the resources available, particularly as is to be expected in the winter. In spite of this service, it is all too frequently impossible for the ailing housewife to get adequate rest.

Red Cross Depot.

Much good and helpful work is done, especially in the loan of articles requisite for home nursing.

(d) Treatment Centres and Clinics.

- (1) Tuberculosis. The Radstock Clinic run by the County Health Authority is the local centre for dealing with this disease. Results from modern therapy continue to be encouraging, and it appears easier to get beds for patients requiring hospital treatment in a reasonably short time.
- (2) Venerereal Disease. The Clinics at Bath and Bristol provide the service required. There are obvious advantages in having the treatment centres at a short distance from this area.
- (3) Infant and Child Welfare Services. Inadequate premises still have to be used. It is unfortunate that this work and that of the General Practitioner cannot be more closely integrated.
- (4) Maternity Services. The service provided by the District Nurses in the home and by the Paulton Hospital Maternity Unit is excellent. The demand for beds at Paulton still exceeds the supply.

(5) Dental Treatment. This is obtainable from dental practitioners working under the National Health Service only. Far too many cases of bad dental hygiene are met. The dental service whilst it was free promised better things in time. The imposition of charges a few years ago is, therefore, considered a deplorable and retrograde step

(6) Mental Treatment. The County Health Authority runs the service for mental patients.

(7) No action has been taken under the National Assistance Act, 1948.

(e) Hospital Services.

This district is in the Bath hospital area.

Claverton Down Hospital admits cases of Infectious Diseases.

The Emergency Bed Bureau continues to deal satisfactorily with immediate hospital admissions.

It is understood that a second operating theatre has not yet been provided for St. Martin's Hospital, Bath. This is most unfortunate. It not only causes delay in dealing with urgent cases, but also wastes valuable bed space.

The shortage of beds for chronic sick cases continues, and is a nation wide problem.

Progress has been made in eliminating the waiting time for outpatient appointments.

(f) General Health Services.

It is considered that the National Health Service should be free at the time of use. The division of patients into paying and non-paying classes continues. It leads to abuses, and is disliked.

It is considered that more economical use of general practitioners time could, without much difficulty, be made.

(g) Care of the Blind.

The service for the blind and for those with very defective vision is run by the County Health Authority.

(h) Epileptics and Spastics.

Treatment of such cases is in the hands of family doctors. The County Health Authority is interested in defective children.

(i) Much good work is done in the welfare services for the aged, although there is still scope for further effort.

SECTION C.

Sanitary circumstances for this District:-

(1) Water.

Sources of supply:-

- (i) The Bottlehead springs at Downhead.
- (ii) Downside and Gurney Slade springs.
- (iii) Chilcompton Springs.

Mains.

The supply has been satisfactory in quality this year.

Diminished yields at all sources caused shortage of water from August to November. Supplies were restricted and available from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. only during the worst period.

Negotiations are proceeding with the Bristol Waterworks Company to increase supplies to be obtained from the Chew Valley Reservoir.

The water has no plumbo-solvent action. No form of contamination is known, and all supplies are chlorinated.

The question of the fluorine content needs consideration concerning the avoiding of dental caries. Further information is, however, thought to be required.

Results of samples taken for analysis:-

Raw water				Treated after going into supply			
Bacteriological		Chemical		Bacteriological		Chemical	
Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	unsatis- factory
2	1	-	-	12	-	-	-

Method of supplies to houses:-

Direct to the house		By means of standpipe	
No. of Dwellinghouses	Pop.	No. of Dwellinghouses	Pop.
3,755	11,815	70	203

The number of dwellinghouses in which a piped supply was substituted for well was 4

(b) Water Supply from Wells:-

Number of Samples taken for Analysis

Satisfactory		Unsatisfactory	
Bacteriological	Chemical	Bacteriological	Chemical
1	-	3	-

One well which served four houses was closed.

It is hoped that it will be possible shortly to complete the scheme for using water from the Chew Valley Reservoir. It would then seem likely that this district would be assured of an ample supply.

(2) Swimming Bath.

The water is by Council supply and is chlorinated and filtered by the Bell Filtration and Chlorination Plant.

The caretaker at one time was not chlorinating the water adequately as users of the baths complained of the taste of the water. It is understood that the caretaker will ignore comments in the future.

(3) Sanitation.

The district has two modern Sewage Disposal Works. It is noted with regret that work on sewerage the Thicketmead area has not yet begun.

Closet accommodation:-

Total number in the district on 31st December, 1955.

(1) Water closets	...	3,804
(2) Pail closets	...	17
(3) Chemical closets	...	12

There have been no conversions to the water carriage system during the year.

(4) Camping Sites.

There are no licensed camping sites.

Two licences have been issued for moveable dwellings.

(5) Public Cleansing.

House refuse is removed by direct labour. Two side loading and one fore and aft tipping vehicles are used.

One tip is in use.

The entire district is covered by a weekly collection.

Trade refuse from three factories is collected when required, a reasonable charge being made.

SECTION D.

Housing.

There are 3,833 permanent houses in this area of which 917 are owned by the Local Authority.

Building during the year:-

	Houses erected during year.	Houses in course of erection.	Gained from conversion of large houses or buildings into flats.	Lost from conversion of two houses into one or more.
By local authority	106	32	-	-
Private enterprise	33	20	-	-
TOTAL	139	52	-	-

Building since the end of the war:-

No. of Post-war Houses erected from 1st April, 1945. to 31st December, 1955.		Housing Programme for 1956.
By Local Authority	By Private Enterprise	
470	158	32

Housing Problem:-

The total number of houses considered unfit for human habitation is 200

It is thought that ten years is necessary to demolish these houses

The number of applicants for Council houses at the end of the year was 390

This is seven more than at the end of last year.

Losses during the year:-

(a) Number of houses closed as result of an undertaking given by the owners or following the issue of Closing Orders 1

(b) Number of houses pulled down 11

The number of houses made fit during the year was.. 14

SECTION E.

Food.

(I) Milk.

(a) Number of Registered Distributors 7

(b) Number of Registered Dairy premises 7
(Other than Dairy premises)

(c) Number of Licensed dealers of designated milk . 4

(II) Ice-Cream.

Number of premises registered for:-

(a) Manufacture and retail 5

(b) Manufacture only 0

(c) Retail only 37

(III) Slaughterhouses and Bacon Factories.

There are five slaughterhouses licensed in this district of which three are operating.

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole or part:-

	Cattle Ex- cluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	182	59	-	316	271
Number inspected	167	57	-	288	239
All diseases except tuberculosis and Cysticerci carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	18	7	-	17	39
Tuberculosis carcase of which some part of organ was condemned.	4	3	-	-	8
Cysticercosis carcases sub- mitted to treatment by refrigeration.	1	1	-	-	-
Weight of meat (in lbs.) condemned for:-					
(a) Tuberculosis	60	40	-	-	370
(b) Cysticercosis	0	0	-	-	-
(c) Other	200	80	-	220	60
TOTAL	260	120	-	220	430

IV. Premises where Food is Prepared.

Number registered under Section 14 of the Food
and Drugs Act, 1938 31

No action has been taken under Section 15 of the Food and
Drugs Act, 1938.

Informal notice has been used when required.

V. Knackers' Yards.

There are none in this district.

VI. Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.

The County Laboratories carry out any examinations requested.

VII. Nutrition.

The level of health and physique of the children generally
continues to be satisfactory.

SECTION F.

Notifiable Diseases.

The following cases of infectious diseases (excluding Tuberculosis) were notified during the year:-

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Cases Notified</u>	<u>Cases Admitted to Hospital</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Measles	103	0	0
Scarlet Fever	8	0	0
Whooping Cough	28	0	0
Pneumonia			
Acute Primary	2	1	1
Influenzal	1	0	1
Erysipelas	6	0	0
Malaria (Benign Tertain	1		
Contracted abroad		0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	1	0

No outbreak of Food Poisoning of any magnitude has occurred. It is considered likely that many mild isolated cases of gastro enteritis do occur which are no reported.

Vaccination.

No vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallcox Prevention) Regulations, 1907.

The vaccination state of the community continues to give cause for anxiety.

Numbers vaccinated or re-vaccinated during the year:-

Age Groups	Under 1 Year	1 Year	2- 4 Years	5 - 14 Years	15 yrs.or over	Total
Primary Vaccin- ation	25	5	2	3	6	41
Re-Vaccination	0	0	1	2	7	10

Diphtheria.

No cases again were reported during the year.

Immunization.

Age Groups	Under 1 Year	1 - 4 Years	5 - 9 Years	Total
Numbers	124	57	12	187

The number of children receiving a re-inforcing immunization during the year was 105.

It is again encouraging to note that there were no cases of diphtheria.

It is not so satisfactory to note that the number of children immunized this year shows a fall of fifty eight.

It is felt that the very success of the immunization campaign is making some parents apthetic.

Scabies.

Thisat present presents no problem, and the occasional cases are dealt with by the family doctors.

Tuberculosis.

	<u>Total Cases Notified</u>	<u>Total Deaths.</u>
Respiratory	10	2
Non-respiratory	1	0

My thanks as usual are due to my colleagues for their large contribution to this report.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant

(Signed) A.H. BULLEID, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

